The crashworthy design of the General Second Class coach will then by validated through an actual crash test. Crash test results will be compared with those obtained through simulation on computers.

M/s Rail India Technical and Economic Services Limited (RITES) will also assist in development of a Crashworthy Design Centre at Research Design and Standards Organization (RDSO), Lucknow which will enable Indian Railways to attain capability of developing crashworthy designs for other types of coaches. M/s RITES will take the assistance of M/s Transportation Technology Centre Incorporated (TTCI) & M/s Applied Research Associates (ARA) of USA who are experts in this area.

(c) RITES is to complete the project in 18 months from June' 03, *i.e.* the date of signing the contract.

(d) All diesel locomotives are already provided with air brake system. All new electric locomotives that are being put into service are with air brake system and Indian Railways have adequate number of air brake diesel and electric locomotives to meet requirement of hauling air braked trains. New coaches and wagons are all being provided with air brake system. Conversion of the existing fleet of coaches to air brake system is expected to be completed by March' 05, subject to availability of funds. All new freight stock being procured is provided with air brake. Existing vacuum brake stock is gradually being phased out and it is proposed to completely phase out vacuum brake freight stock during the next 10 years subejct to availability of funds.

Price Variation Clause in Railways

2192. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that orders placed by Railway for procurement of material and equipments contain a clause which is known as "Price Variation Clause";

(b) if so, the Railways suffer heavily as the suppliers manoeuvre to charge a higher price, particularly in case of long term contracts; and

(c) measures to be taken by Government to overcome this menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) No, Sir. Normally stores contracts are placed on fixed price basis for annual requirements. However, in exceptional cases of procurement of high value stores wherein significant variations in prices of inputs during the currency of contract is anticipated, a well defined and predetermined Price Variation Clause, with reference to base price of inputs, is incorporated.

(b) No, Sir. Even in exceptional cases as mentioned *vide* (a) above, due care is taken while incorporating the Price Variation Clause in the contract so that there is no possibility of manoeuvre by the suppliers.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Trains passing through Naxalite infested region

2193. SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether special security measures are being taken to ensure safety of rail passengers and regular running of train proceeding from Delhi to West Bengal, Assam and other States in Eastern India, and passing through the Naxalite and crime-infested region of Bihar and Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Railways are receiving effective cooperation from the States concerned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes Sir. Some measures have been introduced. Security of trains from sabotage and that of passengers are the primary responsibility of the State Govts. (GRP). Yet, Railways and RPF help out the State Govts, and GRP wherever and whenever required.

(b) In each Division, the Zonal Railways Committees have been formed to identify sections under threat, in consultation with the State Police, and introduce security patrolling of the tracks-as State Govt. is not in a position to perform this preventive measure. The State Govt. have been sensitized and, in a high level meeting, sharing of "actionable